

PRESIDENT: Senator Bereuter. Senator Savage.

SENATOR SAVAGE: For the members of the Appropriations Committee, I don't know whether this is it or not, but the meeting has been changed from 2 o'clock to 1:30 p.m. and will be held in the Supreme Court Hearing Room so that may be it. Senator Bereuter says that is correct. That is what he wanted to do. So, thank you.

CLERK: That is all, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: We go to special order, criminal code, LB 38. We will have 57 minutes.

CLERK: At adjournment on the last day that we considered these amendments, Senator Venditte had offered an amendment to section 77, subsection 5 of page 67. This amendment is found on page 891 of the Legislative Journal. (Read amendment.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Venditte.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, the second of the three amendments that were given to the members on Friday, there was a typing error on the second amendment. On page 67, line 8, strike Class III misdemeanor and it should read strike Class III (a) misdemeanor and insert Class II misdemeanor and, of course, a Class III misdemeanor meaning a three months maximum and/or a \$500 fine. Now I am suggesting now with the amendments that conviction of marijuana weighing one pound or less be a Class II misdemeanor, six months imprisonment, \$1000 fine or both and I guess my philosophy is certainly not in agreement with the members of the committee who, at least, put the criminal code together. It is my feeling that we need strict enforced criminal prosecution if we are going to deter young people from using marijuana. It is not my intention here this morning to get into a long laborious discussion about the ill-effects of marijuana. One Senator last week in front of 250 students here on the floor of the Legislature said that he was not convinced and he did not read any information which said that marijuana was harmful. As a matter of fact, fifteen minutes later the same young people gathered in one room and asked me why was I introducing legislation if the drug was not harmful. Well, I can assure you and members of this Legislature that this insidious drug is probably the biggest strap that has ever come before the American people. I believe that and I don't think young people believe that yet and I would hope that during this session and I think there will be a more appropriate time when the topic of marijuana will be discussed more in depth but I am hoping that at this point in time that the members of the Legislature will see fit to begin increasing and stiffening the penalties for small amounts of marijuana. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Barnett.

SENATOR BARNETT: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the amendment that Senator Venditte has offered for two reasons and I think Senator Venditte has already spoke to one of them himself when he suggested that there might be another bill or a different or appropriate time to talk about the penalties of this issue and I think